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Equality Outcomes

NHS 24’s approach to meeting its duties with regard to equality outcomes has been to work in partnership with patients, staff and other organisations.

NHS 24 continues to make progress against its equality outcomes and has appropriate governance arrangements in place to support their delivery.

Equality Outcome Case Study: Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland

In 2012, the Scottish Parliament’s Equal Opportunities Committee gathered evidence from Gypsy/Travellers and across a number of organisations, which indicated that there was an inconsistency of approach in meeting the health needs of Gypsy/Travellers across Scotland. The evidence also indicated an inconsistent take-up of health services by Gypsy/Travellers, and that Gypsy/Travellers experience poorer health than the general population.

An earlier report commissioned by NHS 24, and partly funded by the Scottish Health Council, identified a similar inconsistent take-up by Gypsy/Travellers accessing NHS 24 services, restricting Gypsy/Travellers from having equality of access to the full range of health services provided by NHS 24.

As a result of these findings, NHS 24 developed an Equality Outcome intended to provide Gypsy/Travellers with improved access to health services and to provide staff with improved knowledge and understanding of the issues that affect Gypsy/Travellers.

NHS 24 developed a partnership approach gaining the support of staff from the third sector organisation Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project (MECOPP), NHS Fife, the Scottish Ambulance Service, Perth and Kinross Council and the Travellers Site Managers Association Scotland.

To help understand the barriers and issues that affect Gypsy/Travellers, NHS 24’s Participation and Equalities Team attended awareness training delivered by MECOPP staff and Gypsy/Travellers.

In 2013, NHS 24 supported a Get Together event, which was held in Perth with Perth and Kinross Council as the lead organisation. The purpose of the event was to bring communities together to participate in health and wellbeing activities and to provide Gypsy/Travellers with the opportunity to positively promote aspects of their culture. The evaluation of this event demonstrated its success.

In 2013 and 2014, NHS 24 staff attended Wellbeing Melas, which were held in Edinburgh. These events were organised by MECOPP, Health in Mind, CAPS – (the Consultation and Advocacy Promotion service) and the LGBT Centre.
Gypsy/Travellers attended these community events, which successfully brought people together to celebrate diversity and promote positive health and wellbeing. NHS 24 were again able to interact with members of the Gypsy/Traveller community, promoting the wide range of services offered by NHS 24, including Breathing Space, a helpline for people experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.

In 2014, NHS 24 staff attended Get Together events, which were held in Perth and Kinross and again led by Perth and Kinross Council. NHS 24 staff involved were able to establish further links within the community and promote NHS 24 services. Anecdotal feedback indicated a far greater understanding of the services provided by NHS 24 than had previously been the case.

Recently NHS 24 and the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) displayed artwork in co-located offices to increase staff's knowledge of issues, affecting Gypsy/Travellers. The artwork was provided by MECOPP, from an exhibition titled Moving Minds. The exhibition was created to raise awareness of this seldom-heard group of people.

NHS 24 also displayed the artwork at a meeting of its Public Partnership Forum, providing people from different communities an opportunity to become more aware of the culture of, and issues faced by, Gypsy/Travellers. Copies of an associated book, also titled Moving Minds, were purchased and are available to staff in NHS 24's libraries.

NHS 24 staff have reported the engagement with Gypsy/Travellers and organisational partners in the staff magazine and staff Intranet. Appropriate organisational governance over these activities has been achieved through its Participation and Equalities (EQIPP) Governance Committee.

A member of NHS 24 staff attends meetings of the NHS Fife Gypsy/Traveller Steering Group. This has provided NHS 24 with an opportunity to work with partner organisations to promote its services to Gypsy/Travellers residing within the Fife area. During 2015 staff from NHS 24 and NHS Fife plan to work together to develop content for Gypsy/Traveller awareness training modules for staff, which will also be available to members of NHS 24's Public Partnership Forum.

In 2014, NHS 24 staff delivered a presentation to the Travellers Site Managers Association Scotland. This provided a further opportunity to promote the range of services provided by NHS 24. In particular, the staff took the opportunity to promote 111, the recently introduced number for NHS 24. The 111 number is free to call from all phones, including mobiles. This has been of significant interest to Gypsy/Travellers, as the cost of calls to NHS 24 could have previously being a barrier to some communities contacting the service.
NHS 24 staff have also visited a Local Authority managed site in Falkirk and were grateful to the Site Manager, who introduced them to people living within a private site. Plans are underway to host an information event at the managed site in Falkirk during 2015.

NHS 24’s engagement has included meeting with mothers of young children, disabled people, older people, and other members of the Gypsy/Traveller community. Gypsy/Travellers have supported NHS 24 to promote its services across communities, including distributing information on NHS 24 within their own local area.

Feedback received from each of these activities has shown improved knowledge within the Gypsy/Traveller community of the services offered by NHS 24 and an increased willingness to engage with staff.

NHS 24’s staff awareness has been raised and the Gypsy/Traveller awareness e-learning module, which is being developed, will include a knowledge check to promote understanding by staff.

**Equality Outcome Case Study: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality**

In 2013, NHS 24 developed equality outcomes intended to promote and advance equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT).

When setting the outcomes NHS 24 considered the evidence available. Research from Stonewall Scotland, a third sector organisation that supports LGBT people, showed that lesbian and bisexual women had higher levels of self harm compared to the general population and that there is also a greater risk of gay men harming themselves than the general population. Further research from the Trans Mental Health Study 2012, showed that 58% of Trans people or people with a Trans history, felt that they had been so distressed at some point, that they needed to seek help or support urgently. 53% of the respondents identified that they had self-harmed and 84% had thought about ending their lives.

NHS 24 approached Stonewall Scotland to help identify the needs of LGBT people and the barriers that they experience. NHS 24 already had a good relationship with Stonewall Scotland, as members of their Diversity Champion and Good Practice Programme.

NHS 24’s NHS inform website, published information produced by Stonewall Scotland, for parents who might have questions about the sexual orientation of their children. Social media was used to promote this area of joint working. NHS 24’s Breathing Space service is a helpline for people experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. Breathing Space advisers received training from
Stonewall Scotland to help them talk inclusively about issues that may affect LGBT people. Further to this training, and in conjunction with Stonewall Scotland, Breathing Space produced tailored information leaflets for people from the LGBT community.

In addition to the tailored leaflets, NHS 24 also produced a roller banner, branded with the Stonewall Good Practice Programme logo, for use at events to promote Breathing Space. The banner and leaflets have been used at Pride Scotland, Pride Glasgow, NHS 24’s Participation and Equalities (EQIPP) Governance Committee, NHS 24’s Public Partnership Forum meetings and the Stonewall Workplace Conference 2013. Delegates at the Stonewall Workplace Conference were provided with copies of the tailored Breathing Space leaflet within their information packs. The NHS 24 Participation and Equalities Manager delivered a good practice workshop at the Stonewall Workplace Conference, alongside the Glasgow Metropolitan College’s Equalities Manager. Three members of NHS 24 staff attended the conference as delegates.

NHS 24’s Public Partnership Forum (PPF) members identified the need to recruit more members from a diverse background. NHS 24 encourages members of the public from across Scotland to join the PPF, to help understand the needs of Scotland’s diverse communities. NHS 24 strongly believes that public involvement directly improves services and helps to build trust between NHS 24 and the public.

NHS 24 and Stonewall Scotland identified a person from the LGBT community interested in taking part in the PPF. The person went through the application process and became a member of the PPF. The new member was invited to attend NHS 24’s Annual Review, which included a patient representative’s private meeting with the Scottish Government’s Public Health Minister.

During 2014, Stonewall Scotland published a report about LGBT people’s experience of using public services, titled, Your Services, Your Say. Contained within the report were the results of a YouGov Plc survey, completed by 1043 LGBT people from across Scotland.

The report identified that LGBT people are more likely to use NHS 24’s phone service. One in three (34%) LGBT people have accessed NHS 24’s phone service in the past 12 months compared to one in six (16%) of the general population. Despite a quarter of LGBT people experiencing poor treatment from mental health services, one in ten (11%) LGBT people have used this service, compared to 3% of the general population.

Stonewall Scotland are a member of the Breathing Space Partnership Network, which meets twice each year. This Partnership Network comprises of 16 partner organisations, together with Breathing Space staff and NHS 24’s Participation and Equalities Team. The meetings act as a forum to encourage discussion and
the sharing of ideas with different groups and communities in Scotland, with the aim of fostering good relations and raising the profile of mental health and wellbeing. Stonewall Scotland chose to highlight its partnership with NHS 24 as a case study in the Your Services, Your Say report.

When setting equality outcomes, NHS 24 recognised its responsibility as an employer as well as a service provider. LGBT people often face specific challenges at all stages of the recruitment cycle and in the workplace. NHS 24 set an outcome that seeks to ensure that access to employment and career development with NHS 24 will be free from barriers or inequalities based on a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

As a Stonewall Diversity Champion, NHS 24 provides information about job opportunities within their annual Starting Out guide. The Diversity Champion logo is displayed on the recruitment pages of the NHS 24 website. NHS 24 has also advertised positions on the Stonewall Scotland Proud Employers website.

The Scottish Workplace Networking for LGBT People (SWAN) is a networking group open to all LGBT employees from the public, private and third sectors within Scotland. SWAN events that take place throughout the year are advertised on the NHS 24 intranet. NHS 24 has arranged to participate at a future SWAN event, which is due to be held in the Golden Jubilee National Hospital in January 2015. At this event, the National Co-ordinator for Breathing Space and Living Life will deliver a presentation to attendees about the work Breathing Space and NHS 24 have undertaken to advance equality for LGBT people.

The Intersectional Projects Co-ordinator for The Equality Network was invited to present a DVD called Breaking Out of the Boxes to the NHS 24 Participation and Equality Group (PEG). This group aims to continue to achieve public involvement and advance equality within NHS 24. It is attended by senior NHS 24 staff, PPF members and staff side representatives. The DVD focused on how other aspects (such as religion or belief, disability, age) of a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person’s identity may affect them. Attendees agreed that the DVD and subsequent discussion was impactful and would help inform their approach to future areas of work.

The Scottish Transgender Alliance, which is part of the Equality Network, delivered transgender awareness training to Breathing Space staff, enhancing the knowledge gained from the training previously delivered by Stonewall Scotland. Breathing Space staff reported increased knowledge and confidence when dealing with calls from transgender people. Scottish Transgender Alliance staff also commented that further to the positive way in which the training was received, they would have increased confidence signposting people to Breathing Space. Additional training sessions are scheduled to take place with the Breathing Space staff based within different locations in Scotland.
The Participation and Equalities team regularly display visual indicators in support of LGBT people. Bespoke email signatures were created to show support for LGBT people. Desk displays and posters have also been put on show to help promote equality and show support for LGBT people. Promotional leaflets from Stonewall Scotland were displayed within NHS 24 offices to increase staff awareness of LGBT people. This visually inclusive approach was promoted at a Stonewall Scotland training session titled Low Cost High Impact Equality Initiatives, which was attended by NHS 24 staff.

NHS 24 gathers employment data relating to the protected characteristics and uses this to determine if any action is required to advance equality. NHS 24’s Participation and Equalities team delivered an equality led training session to the HR team. As part of the session, the importance of completing equality monitoring questionnaires was highlighted. The Stonewall publication, What’s it got to do with you?, was used to help underline the difference this data can make. HR staff reported an increased awareness of capturing this data at all stages of the recruitment process.

The information reported by Stonewall Scotland in Your Services, Your Say in relation to NHS 24 is reassuring and the work undertaken to raise awareness amongst staff has been successful. NHS 24 will continue to take action to advance equality for LGBT people.

Equality Outcome Case Study: Mental Health

In 2013, NHS 24 developed equality outcomes intended to provide enhanced access to treatment for mental illness, including by being delivered through new technology. The following progress has been achieved.

Mental Health Content on NHS inform

The mental health zone of NHS inform has been reviewed to ensure accuracy. In addition a process has been agreed which will enable regular reviews of the content in the future. The Clinical Lead for Mental Health takes overall responsibility for the reviews, which are carried out by a range of senior clinical professionals across NHS Scotland.
Signing of the 'See Me' pledge

On 20 January 2014, NHS 24 signed the 'See Me' pledge. By signing the 'See Me' pledge NHS 24 commits to promote anti-stigma messages as an employer, a service provider and as a broader community stakeholder, making a public commitment to tackle the stigma experienced by people with mental health problems.

NHS 24 developed an action plan, which it is currently implementing.

Prisoner Healthcare Services

The prevalence of mental disorder is known to be significantly higher in the prison population than in the general population. Within the last two years, territorial Health Boards have assumed responsibility for the provision of health services into prisons. It is expected that prisoners will have access to the full range of health services available to those within the general population. This is a challenge particularly around mental health and clinical psychology access.

The Mental Health Team within NHS 24 has been working with the six prisons across Scotland, who have video conference technology installed, to provide improved access to health services for prisoners. Forensic psychiatrists are now using the technology to provide speedier access to assessment follow up and support for nurses working within the prison service.

HMP Kilmarnock is currently piloting access to the NHS 24 “Living Life” service, which provides telephone based guided self-help and CBT for people suffering from mild to moderate anxiety and depression. If successful, the service will then be extended to HMP Shotts.

Breathing Space Website Redesign

Following several months of development work, the new Breathing Space website is now live at www.breathingspace.scot. The new site provides an easily accessible ‘first stop’ for anyone feeling low, stressed or anxious; offering information or advice and signposting visitors to the Breathing Space phoneline for further support. A dedicated section on NHS Living Life can also be accessed through the new website, outlining the appointment-based telephone support available from the Coaches and Therapists at Living Life.
European Mastermind Programme

This project is part of the wider European Mastermind programme and includes a two-year computerised Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (cCBT) trial across four health board regions - Shetland, Grampian, Lanarkshire and Fife.

The trial will allow GPs and other mental health professionals to offer the digital therapy to patients with mild to moderate depression or anxiety within the four participating health boards. The use of digital therapy will enable a much larger patient group to access the clinically proven treatment.

In Scotland, early trials of cCBT by NHS Forth Valley and Tayside have led to its adoption due to consistently effective results. To date, more than 7,000 patients have benefitted from this digital therapy.

NHS 24 will project manage Mastermind in Scotland to ensure the delivery of the two-year trial and to support the development of cCBT across the whole of Scotland. Computerised CBT is useful for all adults with mild to moderate depression and anxiety who require a flexible treatment, that they can do from a range of different locations and at a time that suits them. It is also suitable for patients who do not like the idea of talking therapies or would prefer the anonymity a computerised treatment offers. For clinicians, it means that more patients have access to an early intervention for mild to moderate depression.

The programme was announced at the Scottish Digital Health and Care Conference as part of a week of events in November 2014 to raise awareness of the benefits of digital health care.

Summary of Progress

As demonstrated above, NHS 24 continues to work towards achieving the majority of the outputs relating to its equality outcomes.

When setting its equality outcomes, NHS 24 committed to work in partnership with a third sector organisation that provides a wide range of specialist services for people with dementia and their carers. The intention was to produce marketing material for people with dementia on how to access NHS 24 services. There is a constraint which has prevented NHS 24 from fully achieving the outputs associated with this equality outcome and our approach is being revised.

NHS 24 already produces a 'My Important Information For NHS 24' leaflet, which is distributed across Scotland, including within care settings. This leaflet affords people the opportunity to record personal information, which is asked for when people call NHS 24's unscheduled service. The leaflet was developed from an
earlier piece of work undertaken with a third sector organisation, which was intended to help older people access the service, including those with dementia.

NHS 24's Health Information Services developed an output to support access to appropriate health and wellbeing information tailored to younger children by supporting a proposal for the development of a children's health zone on NHS inform. There is a constraint which has prevented NHS 24’s Health Information Services from fully achieving the outputs associated with this equality outcome. This includes a change of emphasis to exploring solutions to reducing the paediatric demand on Accident and Emergency services.
NHS 24 Contact

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